Structure and stellar content of dwarf galaxies

III. B and R photometry of dwarf galaxies in the M 101 group and the nearby field

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Abstract. We have carried out CCD photometry in the Cousins B and R bands of 21 dwarf galaxies in and around the M 101 group. Eleven are members and suspected members of the group and ten are field galaxies in the projected vicinity of the group. We have derived total magnitudes, effective radii, effective surface brightnesses, as well as galaxy diameters at various isophotal levels in both colours. Best-fitting exponential parameters and colour gradients are also given for these galaxies. Some of the galaxies show a pronounced luminosity excess above the best-fitting exponential at large radii, or surface brightnesses fainter than ≈ 26 mag/arcsec² in R. This feature, while non-significant for a single case and technically difficult to interpret, might be an indication of the existence of an extended old stellar halo in dwarf irregulars. The photometric parameters of the galaxies presented here will be combined with previously published data for nearby dwarf galaxies and statistically analysed in a forthcoming paper.

Key words: galaxies: general — galaxies: fundamental parameters — galaxies: photometry — galaxies: irregular — galaxies: structure — galaxies: luminosity function

1. Introduction

A good knowledge of the local galactic neighbourhood is prerequisite for an understanding of the distant (early) universe. Deep images, such as the spectacular Hubble Deep Field, can only be interpreted properly if the dwarf galaxy content of the local universe is very well known. However, studies of nearby dwarf galaxies have until recently concentrated on the Local Group (LG), a rather small volume of space. A larger piece of the local universe is captured in the “10 Mpc Catalogue” of galaxies by Kraan-Korteweg & Tammann (1979), updated by Schmidt & Boller (1992a). This list is intended to contain all galaxies with radial velocities of less than 500 km s⁻¹ as referred to the centroid of the LG, i.e. lying within a distance of about 10 Mpc. At present, the list includes c.a. 300 (mostly dwarf) galaxies, but this number is bound to grow due to continued efforts to detect extremely faint and diffuse nearby stellar systems (Karachentseva & Karachentsev 1998).

Unfortunately, the available photometric data on “10 Mpc objects” is relatively scarce and not very reliable for the fainter galaxies (Patterson & Thuan 1996). We have therefore started a long-term programme to do systematic multicolour imaging of possibly all dwarfish objects in the 10 Mpc volume. The goal is not only to get total magnitudes in order to assess the true shape of the faint end of the local luminosity function of galaxies, but also to derive all relevant structural parameters for these dwarfs and to compare them with existing data on the dwarf galaxy populations of, foremost, the Virgo and Fornax clusters e.g. Binggeli & Cameron (1991), in order to get clues on galaxy evolution in different environments.

Most galaxies within 10 Mpc distance are organized into a small number of well-known groups of galaxies; essentially these are the IC 342, M 81, M 101, CVn I, Cen A, and Scl groups (Schmidt & Boller 1992b). Following previous work on the M 81 group dwarfs (Bremnes et al. 1998; Lesaffre et al. 1999), hereafter Papers I & II, we here present CCD photometric data in the B and R photometric bands for the 11 known M 101 group dwarf members, as well as 10 field dwarfs in the vicinity of M 101. A short description of the M 101 group is given in the following section. The photometric data presented here (Sect. 4) will be combined with those of
Table 1. M101 members (M), possible members (PM) and Field dwarfs (F) observed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Memb. No.</th>
<th>Ident. 1</th>
<th>Ident. 2</th>
<th>R.A. (h m s)</th>
<th>Dec. (° ′ ″)</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>$D_{25}$ (′)</th>
<th>$B_T$ (mag)</th>
<th>$V_{hel}$ km s$^{-1}$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F 1</td>
<td>UGC 08215</td>
<td>UGC 08215</td>
<td>13 08 03.3</td>
<td>46 49 43</td>
<td>Im</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>16.03</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 2</td>
<td>DDO 167</td>
<td>UGC 08308</td>
<td>13 13 22.0</td>
<td>46 19 07</td>
<td>Im</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>15.50</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 3</td>
<td>DDO168</td>
<td>UGC 08320</td>
<td>13 14 26.1</td>
<td>45 55 29</td>
<td>Im</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>13.04</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 4</td>
<td>UGCA 342</td>
<td>UGCA 342</td>
<td>13 15 08.6</td>
<td>42 00 10</td>
<td>Im</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>388</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 5</td>
<td>DDO 169</td>
<td>UGC 08331</td>
<td>13 15 30.7</td>
<td>47 29 47</td>
<td>Im</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>14.27</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 6</td>
<td>NGC 5204</td>
<td>UGC 08490</td>
<td>13 29 36.4</td>
<td>58 25 04</td>
<td>Sm</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>11.7$^1$</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 7</td>
<td>UGC 08508</td>
<td>UGC 08508</td>
<td>13 30 45.3</td>
<td>54 54 34</td>
<td>Im</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>13.88</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM 8</td>
<td>NGC 5229</td>
<td>UGC 08550</td>
<td>13 34 02.8</td>
<td>47 54 55</td>
<td>Sd</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>14.10</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 9</td>
<td>NGC 5238</td>
<td>UGC 08565</td>
<td>13 34 42.8</td>
<td>51 36 50</td>
<td>Sdm</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>13.55</td>
<td>232</td>
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<tr>
<td>F 10</td>
<td>DDO 181</td>
<td>UGC 08651</td>
<td>13 39 53.8</td>
<td>40 44 21</td>
<td>Im</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>14.36</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM 11</td>
<td>UGC 08659</td>
<td>UGC 08659</td>
<td>13 40 33.9</td>
<td>55 25 44</td>
<td>Im</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>16.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 12</td>
<td>DDO 183</td>
<td>UGC 08760</td>
<td>13 50 51.1</td>
<td>38 01 17</td>
<td>Im</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>14.64</td>
<td>193</td>
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<tr>
<td>F 13</td>
<td>UGC 08833</td>
<td>UGC 08833</td>
<td>13 54 48.9</td>
<td>35 50 17</td>
<td>Im</td>
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<td>228</td>
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<tr>
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<td>HOv</td>
<td>UGC 08837</td>
<td>13 54 45.1</td>
<td>53 54 17</td>
<td>Im</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>13.65</td>
<td>144</td>
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<tr>
<td>M 15</td>
<td>UGC 08882</td>
<td>UGC 08882</td>
<td>13 57 18.7</td>
<td>54 06 25</td>
<td>dE, N</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>15.28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM 16</td>
<td>MGC 9-23-21</td>
<td>MGC 9-23-21</td>
<td>13 57 37.9</td>
<td>51 58 26</td>
<td>BCD?</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>16.0$^2$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM 17</td>
<td>UGC 08914</td>
<td>UGC 08914</td>
<td>13 59 11.9</td>
<td>52 21 45</td>
<td>Im</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 18</td>
<td>NGC 5474</td>
<td>UGC 09013</td>
<td>14 05 02.0</td>
<td>53 39 44</td>
<td>Scd</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>11.77</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 19</td>
<td>NGC 5477</td>
<td>UGC 09018</td>
<td>14 05 33.1</td>
<td>54 27 39</td>
<td>Sm</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>14.19</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 20</td>
<td>DDO 190</td>
<td>UGC 09240</td>
<td>14 24 43.4</td>
<td>44 31 33</td>
<td>Im</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>13.10</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>M 21</td>
<td>DDO 194</td>
<td>UGC 09405</td>
<td>14 35 24.6</td>
<td>57 15 24</td>
<td>Im</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>14.52</td>
<td>222</td>
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</table>

Notes: Columns 5 and 6: 2000.0 epoch coordinates taken from the NED. Column 7: Dwarf type reckoned by B.B. on the system of Sandage & Binggeli (1984). Columns 8 and 9: Diameter at $\mu = 25$ mag/′′ and total apparent blue magnitude from the present photometry, from Schmidt & Boller (1992a ($^1$), or from other sources compiled by one of us (B.B.) ($^2$). Column 10: heliocentric velocity from NED.

previous papers. An interpretation and scientific discussion of this material is planned to follow in a future paper of this series.

2. Sample and imaging

The M101 group, with $D \approx 6.5$ Mpc (Karachentsev 1996), is the most distant one in the 10 Mpc volume. It is also the poorest group of all, including the LG. It is completely dominated by M101 itself: the second-ranked group member, NGC 5585, is already 3 magnitudes fainter than M101. Only 13 members and possible members of the group are known to date, half of which are lying very close to M101 and can therefore be regarded as M101 satellites. With one exception (the dwarf elliptical UGC 8882) they are all late-type dwarfs (Sd, Sm, Im). One peculiar feature of the group is its luminosity function: the population of very faint and diffuse dwarfs (elliptical or irregular), which is so frequent elsewhere, is apparently simply missing here (the faintest member known is as bright as $M_B \sim -14$). We have therefore made an attempt to find new candidate members on deep POSS II Schmidt films, but found only one additional possible member (the BCD MGC 9-23-21). A recent blind HI survey of the M101 area has also not resulted in a single new member of the group (Kraan-Korteweg et al. 1999, in preparation). It will take surveys of highly increased sensitivity to uncover the sought-for exponential rise of the luminosity function of the M101 group.

In Table 1 we give a complete list of the 11 presently known members (M) and possible members (PM) of the M101 group as well as 10 field (F) dwarfs that were imaged during the same run. This list was prepared by B. Binggeli based on the catalogue of Schmidt & Boller (1992a). A map showing the distribution of these objects on the sky is shown in Fig. 1, where the galaxies are coded according to their type and group membership. A gallery of images is given in Fig. 2. It should be noted that the objects listed in Table 1 and the images displayed in Fig. 2 include all M101 group members known to date with the exception of the two giant members M101 and NGC 5585 for which data and images are given in Sandage & Tammann (1974, 1987).
Table 2. Parameters of the ellipse fits at approximatively 25 mag/\arcsec

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Galaxy</th>
<th>PA [deg]</th>
<th>a [\arcsec]</th>
<th>b [\arcsec]</th>
<th>b/a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>1.</td>
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<td>20.9</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>0.74</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>DDO 167</td>
<td>069</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>0.60</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>DDO 168</td>
<td>058</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>DDO 169</td>
<td>044</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>NGC 5204</td>
<td>084</td>
<td>137.7</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>UGC 08508</td>
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<td>54.3</td>
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<td>0.56</td>
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<td>8.</td>
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<td>15.1</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
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<td>58.0</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>0.68</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>DDO 181</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>55.7</td>
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<td>0.44</td>
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<td>11.</td>
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<td>045</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>0.75</td>
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<td>12.</td>
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<td>0.26</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
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<td>052</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>0.71</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>HO IV</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>103.2</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>0.26</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
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<td>163</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>0.74</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>MCG 9-23-21</td>
<td>053</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
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<td>15.4</td>
<td>0.72</td>
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<td>99.3</td>
<td>0.96</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
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<td>30.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>DDO 190</td>
<td>014</td>
<td>62.3</td>
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<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
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<td>050</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
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</table>

3. Reductions

The images were flatfielded using combined twilight and dome flats. The photometry was done with the MIDAS package developed by ESO. The images were combined, bias-subtracted and flatfielded using standard procedures. The subsequent reductions were done within the SURF/PHOT context in MIDAS. The background was determined by fitting a tilted plane with FIT/BACKGROUND and was checked for correctness by measuring the sky level in different locations in the field. For each galaxy the centre and the ellipse parameters (ellipticity, position angle counted counter-clockwise from the horizontal axis) were determined at the level of ~ 25 mag/\arcsec by the ellipse fitting routine FIT/ELL3 and are given in Table 2.

These parameters were then used to obtain the total light profile (growth curve) by integrating the galaxy light in elliptical apertures of increasing equivalent radius. A surface brightness profile is obtained by differentiating the growth curve. The galaxy profiles derived in this way include the bright regions that usual ellipse fitting routines ignore. Circular aperture growth curves were also obtained as in Paper I. The resulting profiles by the elliptical aperture photometry are shown in Fig. 3 and the derived photometric parameters are shown in Table 1. The circular aperture photometry served as a comparison between the photometry presented here and that of Paper I. This comparison is given in Appendix A, where it is shown that the agreement between the two methods is excellent.

The profiles are traced down to the level where the errors due to the fluctuations in the sky level on the profile become dominant. As discussed in Sect. 4.4, this represents approx. 28.5 mag/\arcsec in B and 27.5 mag/\arcsec in R.

The photometric calibrations were done using standard methods, with calibration fields chosen to be relatively close on the sky to the observed galaxies. These fields were taken from Smith et al. (1985). The calibration stars were imaged before and after imaging every second galaxy.
Fig. 2. $B$-band CCD images (except NGC 5204 for which only a $R$-band image was available) of the M 101 group dwarf members and the dwarfs in the vicinity of M 101, shown in the same order as listed in Table 1. The scale is the same for all pictures and is given by the size of one image side = 5/9. North is up and east to the left.
Fig. 2. continued
Fig. 2. continued
Galactic absorption values were taken from the NED database, and are essentially zero for all galaxies in the sample ($A_B = 0.00$ for all galaxies except NGC 5204 which has $A_B = 0.01$). Therefore no correction was applied. A correction for internal extinction was not applied either.

4. Results

4.1. Model-free photometric parameters and radial profiles

The global photometric parameters of our objects are listed in Table 3, and the columns represent:

- Column 1: number of the galaxy ordered by increasing right ascension.
- Column 2: name of the galaxy.
- Column 3: total apparent magnitude in the $B$ band.
- Column 4: total apparent magnitude in the $R$ band.
- Column 5: effective radius in $B$ ["].
- Column 6: effective radius in $R$ ["].
- Column 7: effective surface brightness in $B$ [mag/"].
- Column 8: effective surface brightness in $R$ [mag/"].
- Column 9: radius where $<\mu> = 25$ mag/" in the $B$ band ["].
- Column 10: as above, except $<\mu> = 26$ mag/".
- Column 11: as above, except $<\mu> = 27$ mag/".
- Column 12: radius where $<\mu> = 25$ mag/" in the $R$ band ["].
- Column 13: as above, except $<\mu> = 26$ mag/".
- Column 14: as above, except $<\mu> = 27$ mag/".
- Column 15: total $B - R$ [mag].

The total apparent magnitude of a galaxy was read off the growth curve at a sufficiently large radius (i.e. where the growth curve becomes asymptotically flat). The model-free effective radius was simply read at half of the total growth curve intensity. The effective surface brightness is then given by

$$<\mu>_{\text{eff}} [\text{mag/"}] = M + 5 \log(R_{\text{eff}} [\"]) + 2.$$  \hspace{1cm} (1)
The central extrapolated surface brightness \( \mu_0 \) and the exponential scale length \( 1/\alpha \) are the two free parameters of the exponential fit. In this work the fits to the profiles were done on the outer parts of the profiles by a least squares fitting procedure (note, however, that the very outermost parts were not considered in the fitting, as they are often “flaring up”, see below Sect. 5). The best-fitting parameters are listed in Table 4. The best-fitting exponential profiles are plotted as dash-dotted lines along with the observed profiles in Fig. 3.

The deviation from a pure exponential law is expressed by the difference between the total magnitude of an exponential intensity law given by

\[
M_{\text{exp}} = \mu_0^{\exp} + 5 \log \alpha - 2.0, \tag{4}
\]

and the actual measured total magnitude. The results are shown in Table 4. The difference is an indication of the goodness of fit of the exponential intensity profile. The columns of Table 4 are as follows:

- Column 1: as Col. 1 of Table 3.
- Column 2: as Col. 2 of Table 3.
- Column 3: extrapolated central surface brightness according to equation 3 in \( B \) [mag/"^2].
- Column 4: as above but in \( R \).
- Column 5: exponential scale length in \( B \) ["].
- Column 6: as above but in \( R \).
- Column 7: difference between the total magnitude as derived from the exponential model and the true total magnitude in \( B \).
- Column 8: as above but in \( R \).
- Column 9: radial colour gradient determined from the difference in the slopes of the model fits as described in Sect. 4.3 [mag/"].
Fig. 3. Radial surface brightness profiles of the observed dwarf galaxies in $B$ (lower) and $R$ (upper) except for NGC 5204 (only $R$) and DDO 181 and MCG 9-23-21 for which only $B$ data are available. The dash-dotted lines represent the exponential fits, as described in Sect. 4.2 and the dashed and dotted lines represent the error envelopes as described in Sect. 4.4. The radii are all equivalent radii ($r = \sqrt{ab}$).
4.3. Colour gradients

As one can see in Table 4, the colour gradients of the galaxies are very small, if not zero \((< d(B - R) / dr > \approx 0.012 \pm 0.013 \text{mag} / ''\)) Many authors report that colour profiles show very small gradients or are flat in the case of dwarf galaxies (Paper I, Patterson & Thuan 1996). We find that if the galaxies do show a trend in their colour profiles, they become slightly redder with increasing radius. The actual colour profiles together with the difference between the slopes of exponential fits (dash-dotted) are plotted in Fig. 4.

4.4. Photometric uncertainties

Uncertainties in the photometry have multiple sources: calibration errors, flatfielding and sky subtraction, photon shot noise, readout noise, contamination by cosmic rays, foreground stars and background galaxies.

The largest contribution to the uncertainties in the global photometric parameters is from the photometric calibration. As the nights were non-photometric, one must beware of uncontrollable errors in the zero-point and the extinction coefficient. The statistical uncertainty on the photometric calibration is of the order of 0.1 mag, due to an uncertainty of \(\sim 0.08\) mag and \(\sim 0.05\) on the zero-point and the extinction coefficient, respectively.

The uncertainties on the photometric profiles at low levels are dominated by the non-flatness of the sky background. The pixel-to-pixel fluctuations caused by photon shot noise are averaged out by measuring azimuthally averaged profiles. At typical sky levels of the order of \(\sim 22.7\,\text{mag}/''\) in \(B\), and \(\sim 21.7\,\text{mag}/''\) in \(R\), and a flat-fielding accurate to \(\lesssim 0.5\%\) of the sky background, the sky fluctuations reach values similar to the the galaxy profiles at respectively \(\sim 28.5\) and \(\sim 27.5\,\text{mag}/''\).

To have a handle on this error along a profile, we have calculated error envelopes for all our profiles based on their best-fitting exponentials. The combined uncertainty caused by photon shot noise from the sky and the galaxy, calculated for azimuthally averaged \(1''\) annuli, has been added in quadrature with a large-scale sky flatness and subtraction error term set to a constant 0.5% of the actual sky electron counts. The error term obtained this way has been added or subtracted, respectively, from the intensity profiles corresponding to exponential surface brightness profiles and then converted to magnitudes to produce the upper and lower error envelopes. These error envelopes are shown in Fig. 3 along with the observed and model profiles. The colour profile error envelopes, shown in Fig. 4 as dotted lines, have been calculated by using the error term as described above for each colour and applying usual error formulae for logarithms and combining the errors thus obtained for each colour by quadrature. It is to be noted that the large scale fluctuation level of 0.5% of the sky background is an upper limit, most frames showing less variation, i.e. these error estimates are rather conservative. The calibration zero-point uncertainty is not included in the plots.

The uncertainties on the photometric profiles at low levels are dominated by the non-flatness of the sky background. The pixel-to-pixel fluctuations caused by photon shot noise are averaged out by measuring azimuthally averaged profiles. At typical sky levels of the order of \(\sim 22.7\,\text{mag}/''\) in \(B\), and \(\sim 21.7\,\text{mag}/''\) in \(R\), and a flat-fielding accurate to \(\lesssim 0.5\%\) of the sky background, the sky fluctuations reach values similar to the the galaxy profiles at respectively \(\sim 28.5\) and \(\sim 27.5\,\text{mag}/''\).

The errors on the profiles at low luminosity do not influence the total magnitude to a large extent, but sources...
projected onto or near the galaxies do. We masked out such objects, trying not to eliminate H II regions from the galaxy. An overall assessment of our photometric accuracy is provided by a comparison with external data. In Fig. 5 photometry from this paper is compared to data published in Schmidt & Boller (1992a). The agreement is quite good, $\sigma_m \sim 0.13$ mag in the $B$ band.

5. Discussion

The surface brightness profiles shown in Fig. 3 are quite typical for dwarf galaxies, being more or less straight lines, i.e. exponentials, in a large range of intermediate radii, with deviations from this in the innermost and the outermost parts, i.e. at small and very large radii; compare, e.g., with the profiles of M81 group dwarfs in Paper I, and of Virgo cluster dwarfs in Binggeli & Cameron (1993). The inner deviation from the exponential can be a luminosity cusp, which is common among dwarf ellipticals,
especially nucleated ones. This feature is well seen in the
only dwarf elliptical of our sample, UGC8882. Late-type
dwarf galaxies (Sd, Sm, Im), on the other hand, tend to
exhibit a central luminosity deficit with respect to the
best-fitting exponential (see again Fig. 3). In most cases
this deficit is simply caused by the irregular structure of
the star-forming region which is confined to the central
part of a galaxy. The peak surface brightness of a star-
forming galaxy can be far off the center as referred to the
faint outer isophotes. If the profile is centered on the faint
outer isophotes (which in our opinion is the only way a
profile makes sense, as it should, ideally, refer to center of
the mass and not the luminosity distribution), then the
consequence is obviously an apparent luminosity deficit
in the central part. This is dramatically demonstrated by
NGC 5474, but also HoIv (see Figs. 2 and 3). It simply
means that the innermost part of the mean radial pro-
file of a dwarf irregular (and sometimes even a late spiral)
should not be taken at face value. This is a principal lim-
itation of one-dimensional “surface” photometry of non-
symmetric galaxies.

Some of our galaxies show a luminosity excess above
a pure exponential in the surface brightness profiles at
large radii (Fig. 3), most strongly in NGC 5238, but also
in DDO 168, DDO 169, DDO 183, NGC 5477, DDO 190,
and DDO 194. NGC 5229 also shows an excess in one
colour but in this case our photometric method is clearly
not well suited, due to the galaxy being almost edge-
on and warped. On average this excess sets in at a sur-
face brightness of $\mu \gtrsim 26.7 \pm 0.7 \text{mag}/\text{arcsec}^2$ in $B$ and
$\mu \gtrsim 26.1 \pm 0.8 \text{mag}/\text{arcsec}^2$ in $R$. This trend was not ob-
served with our M 81 group dwarfs (Paper I), nor was
it found in Virgo cluster irregulars, see Fig. 9 in Binggeli
& Cameron (1993), whose radial profiles were followed to
equally faint levels (most other photometric studies do not
go faint enough, which renders a comparison difficult).

A possible reason one could think of for this feature
is the fact that in the present photometry the elliptical
shape of the running aperture was fixed for a given galaxy.

That ellipse was determined at approximately $25 \text{mag}/\text{arcsec}^2$
(cf. Sect. 3). Suppose that the outermost part of a galaxy,
at a surface brightness level well below $25 \text{mag}/\text{arcsec}^2$, is
more spherical than the inner part, or that there is strong
isophotal twisting: then the mean surface brightness pro-
file derived from apertures of fixed ellipticity will become
flatter at large radii, i.e. will show an excess of the kind
discussed here. Galaxies such as DDO 168, DDO 169 and
NGC 5238 show such a behaviour, but at very low lev-
els. For instance DDO 168 has an apparent ellipticity of
$\epsilon = 0.60$ and a position angle of 58 degrees for an ellipse
fit at $< \mu_B > = 25 \text{mag}/\text{arcsec}^2$ and at $< \mu_B > = 27 \text{mag}/\text{arcsec}^2$
these values are resp. 0.42 and 62. For DDO 169 these val-
ues are resp. 0.68, 44, 0.70 and 49 and for NGC 5238 these
values are resp. 0.32, 87, 0.33 and 88. In the last case $\epsilon$ then
rises to 0.41 in the outermost regions, with unchanged PA.
It seems unlikely that this is the reason for the excess.

A possible physical explanation of the observed break
in the surface brightness profiles – well-known from the
photometry of disk galaxies – is of course the presence of
two distinct galaxian components (like bulge and disk).

The existence, in dwarf irregulars, of an underlying popu-
lation of old stars that stretches over a large characteristic
scale length, with a luminous, more concentrated, young
population on top of it, is indeed highly expected. It has
recently been shown that Local Group dwarf irregulars
possess extended old halos (Minniti & Zijlstra 1996). With
this regard it is also interesting that the observed break
in the surface brightness profiles of our dwarfs seems to
be well correlated with a flattening of the corresponding
$B - R$ colour profiles (see Fig. 4). The colour of the excess
light is rather red, with the onset of the flatter part at a
$B - R$ value of $\sim 1.2 \pm 0.1$ mag.

So, have we detected an underlying old halo population
on purely photometric grounds? Unfortunaletly, this can-
cannot be claimed (yet). The deviations from the exponential
luminosity and colour profiles discussed here are mostly
well within the error envelopes, as indicated in Figs. 3
and 4. Hence the significance for a single case is quite
weak. However, we note again that the error envelopes
are rather conservative (also see the note on DDO 168 be-
low). The tendency seen in so many galaxies is certainly
very suggestive and a follow-up of this question by means
of multicolour photometry of very high accuracy and sen-
sitivity, in order to definitively prove the reality of the
phenomenon, seems very desirable.

6 Notes on individual galaxies

UGC 8215: small irregular with a relatively steep light
profile. The central part shows a slight deficit compared
to a pure exponential. One of the few galaxies with a slight
bluing of its colours towards larger radii (but could also
have a flat colour profile within the errors).

DDO 167: slightly more irregular than UGC 8215, but has
identical lightprofile characteristics.
DDO 168: shows an excess in its surface brightness profiles with respect to a pure exponential at large radii as well as a deficit in the central regions. Its colour profile displays a clear flattening from the point at which the luminosity excess becomes visible in the profiles. But the error envelopes are large at those points both in the radial profiles and colour profiles. It is to be noted though that for this galaxy, the measured sky counts after subtraction were marginally negative around the galaxy. Therefore one should have seen a slight deficit in the outer parts of the brightness profiles rather than an excess, if the deviations were only due to the uncertainties.

UGCA 342: very irregular, and projected close to a bright star. At a velocity of 388 km s\(^{-1}\) it might belong to the outskirts of M 63, which has a redshift of 504 km s\(^{-1}\). Indeed, UGCA 342 is only 7.7\(^\prime\) from M 63, which is less than one optical diameter of M 63. At a distance of \(\approx 8.5 \text{ Mpc} \) this represents \(\approx 19 \text{ kpc} \) in projected distance. Some diffuse features are visible in the image, especially to the south-east of UGCA 342, supporting the idea that UGCA 342 is some luminous condensation in the outer part of M 63. An optical image with a radio map of M 63, provided by Fig. 6 in Bosma (1981), confirms this idea. Note the similar velocities at the coordinates of UGCA 342. The elongated shape, diffuseness, nearby bright star and background sky “structure” made accurate photometry impossible.

DDO 169: like DDO 168, one observes similar features in the surface brightness and colour profiles. Extended “tail” towards the north. This tail seems to be slightly bluer than the rest of the galaxy.

NGC 5204: imaged only in R only.

UGC 08508: slight excess in the outer regions as well as a slight deficit in the inner regions. The excess is unlikely to be real.

NGC 5229: edge on, slightly warped.

NGC 5238: shows a relatively large excess in the surface brightness profiles, as well as a flattening of its colour profile. The characteristics of the excess and the colour profile are similar to those of DDO 168.

DDO 181: imaged only in B. Pronounced brightness deficit with respect to a pure exponential in the centre.

UGC 08659: its colour profile shows a bluing with increasing radius. Irregular brighter knots.

DDO 183: slight surface brightness excess in the outer parts as well as a deficit in the inner part. Possible flattening of the colour profile.

UGC 08833: similar to DDO 167.

HO IV: the light is distributed in patches, and the surface brightness profile is almost flat in the inner regions.

UGC 08882: nucleated dwarf elliptical with a flat colour profile and a slightly blue nucleus relative to the bulk of the galaxy.

MGC 9-23-21: projected very close to a bright star, making accurate photometry very difficult. The relatively large light gradient around the galaxy more or less excludes accurate photometry of the fainter parts, especially considering the small angular size.

UGC 08914: shows a surface brightness profile that falls off faster than an exponential in the outer parts. Flat colour profile except for a red central region relative to the surrounding parts.

NGC 5474: highly asymmetrical galaxy. Too large for the field of view for accurate photometry due to sky subtraction difficulties.

NGC 5477: also shows a possible surface brightness excess in the outer parts. The colour profile on the other hand looks more usual.

DDO 190: redder central part that is slightly less bright than predicted by an exponential profile.

DDO 194: flat colour profile except for a slightly bluer nucleus.

Appendix: Elliptical vs. circular aperture photometry

We here compare the method used in this paper and that used in Paper I, i.e. elliptical vs. circular aperture photometry. Figures 6 to 10 compare the different photometric parameters obtained with the two methods. The comparison is useful for future studies of a sample of galaxies measured by either of these two methods.

From Fig. 6 one can see the excellent agreement between the elliptical and the circular aperture photometry as far as the total magnitudes are concerned. The vast majority of the galaxies show differences less than 0.025 mag.

Figure 7, shows that the effective radius measurements strongly depend on the apparent shape of the galaxies. Elongated galaxies, as illustrated by NGC 5229, which has an apparent ellipticity of \(\epsilon = 0.81\), show different effective radii as measured by the different methods. In such cases the circular aperture photometry is clearly inadequate.

The effective surface brightness obtained by the two methods show reasonable agreement except, as noted above and for the same reasons, in the case of very elongated objects, see Fig. 8.
Fig. 7. Comparison between the effective radius obtained with elliptical and circular aperture photometry. The leftmost object corresponds to NGC 5229

Fig. 8. Comparison between the effective surface brightness obtained with elliptical and circular aperture photometry. The leftmost object corresponds to NGC 5229

As can be seen in the plots for the exponential fit parameters $\mu_0$ and $\alpha$, Figs. 9 and 10, the circular apertures yield slightly larger scale-lengths and lower central surface brightnesses on average than the elliptical apertures.

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